



HINE  
HABERLIN

# SPAWN<sup>®</sup>

THE VOICE-HEARERS  
PART ONE: SKIN DEEP



*Chaplin*

ISSUE 166 DIGITAL EDITION  
SPAWN.COM



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**PREVIOUSLY IN SPAWN:**

Al Simmons was a hit man for the US government until a treacherous assassin ended his life. At the moment of death, Al was offered a deal by the demon Malebolgia and returned to Earth as Spawn, a creature with supernatural powers born in Hell.

As Armageddon consumed the world, Spawn turned against his masters, destroying all life on Earth. While God and Satan continue their endless conflict in a parallel universe, Spawn has re-created the world and resurrected the human race, in what has become known as the White Light. The portals to Heaven and Hell are closed, leaving humanity free from the influence of angels and demons.

Spawn has been forced to face his own brutal past and the memory that Al Simmons beat his wife, causing her to miscarry their unborn child. Knowing he can never go back to his beloved Wanda, he has returned instead to the squalid alleyways that have become his purgatory.

Meanwhile, in Spawn's brave new world the cracks in are starting to show.

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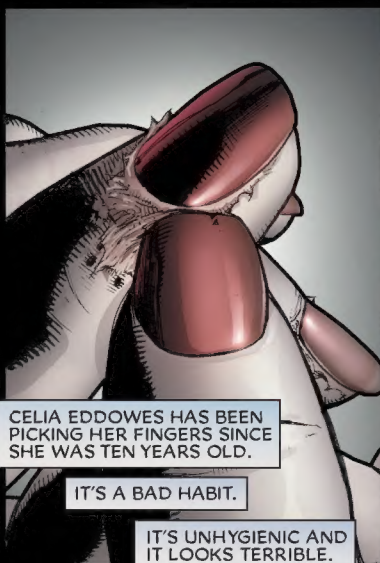


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CELIA EDDOWES HAS BEEN PICKING HER FINGERS SINCE SHE WAS TEN YEARS OLD.

IT'S A BAD HABIT.

IT'S UNHYGIENIC AND IT LOOKS TERRIBLE.



SHE NIBBLES ON HER FINGERS LIKE A RABBIT... PEELS THE STRIPS OF SKIN OFF WITH HER TEETH...



...AND EATS THEM.



HER DOCTOR SAYS IT'S NERVOUS STRESS. SOME PEOPLE BITE THEIR NAILS. SOME PEOPLE PULL THEIR HAIR OUT, STRAND BY STRAND UNTIL THEY HAVE BALD PATCHES.

CELIA DOESN'T PULL HER HAIR OUT OR BITE HER NAILS.

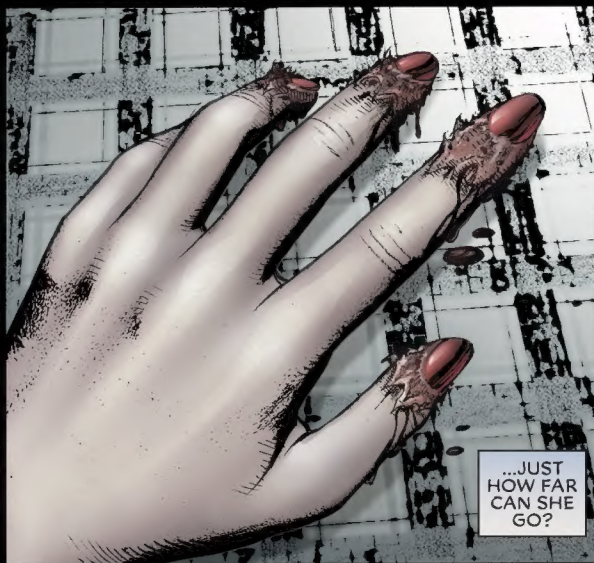
SHE TAKES GOOD CARE OF HER NAILS.

BUT SINCE THE WHITE LIGHT, SHE JUST CAN'T SEEM TO STOP THE PICKING.



SHE'S BEEN AT IT FOR HOURS. PICKING AND NIBBLING.

THE MURMURING VOICE IN HER HEAD KEEPS GOADING HER, CHALLENGING HER...



...JUST HOW FAR CAN SHE GO?



SURE, IT HURTS,  
BUT THE PAIN IS A  
LONG WAY OFF.

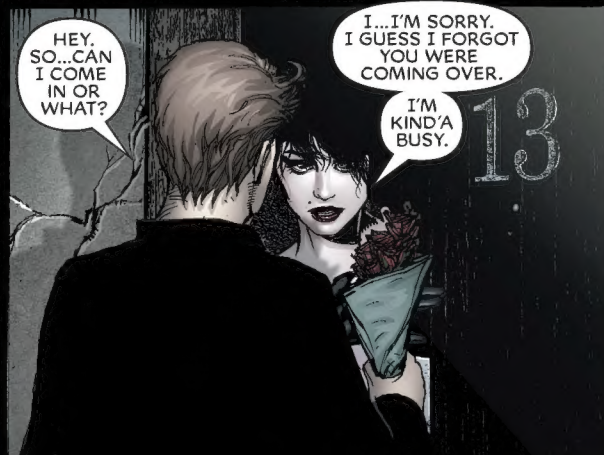
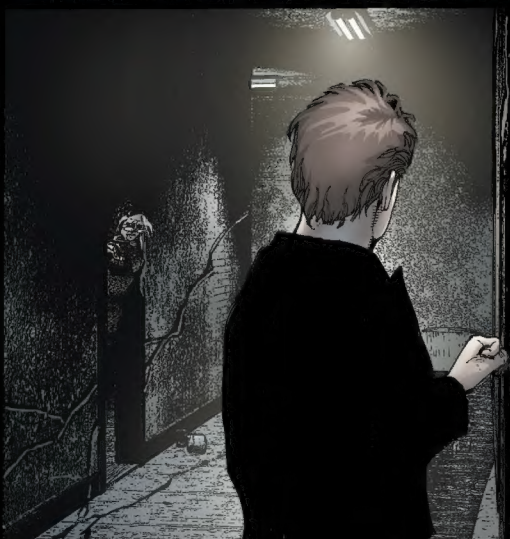
ALL THE WAY  
AT THE END OF  
HER ARMS.

IT FEELS LIKE HER  
HANDS BELONG TO  
SOMEONE ELSE...

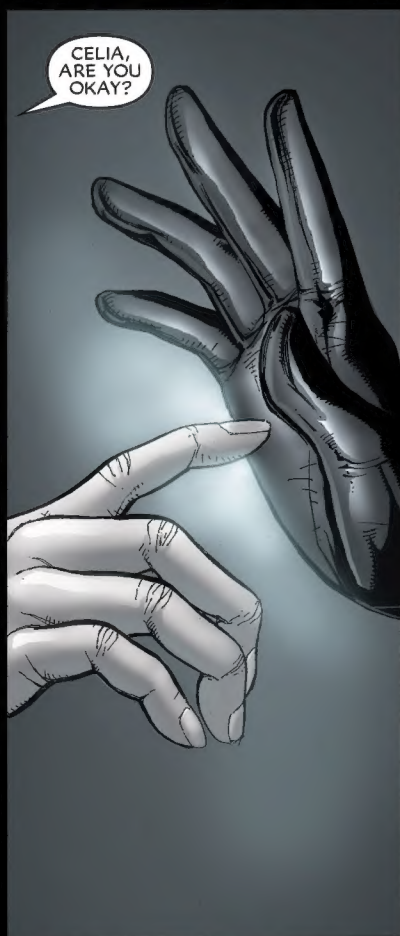
...AS IF SHE  
REALLY ISN'T  
RESPONSIBLE  
FOR WHAT  
THEY DO AT ALL.



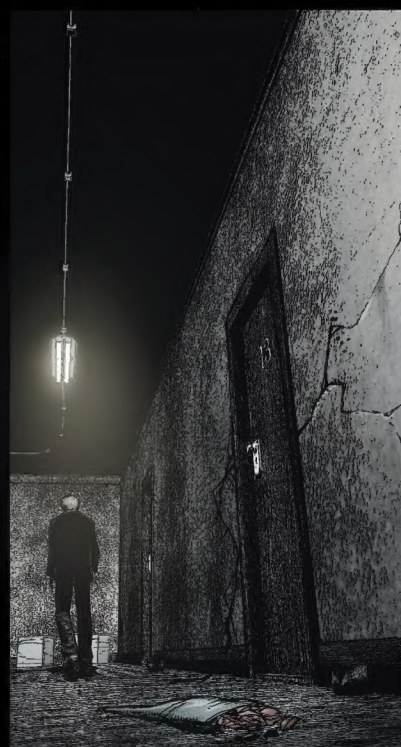








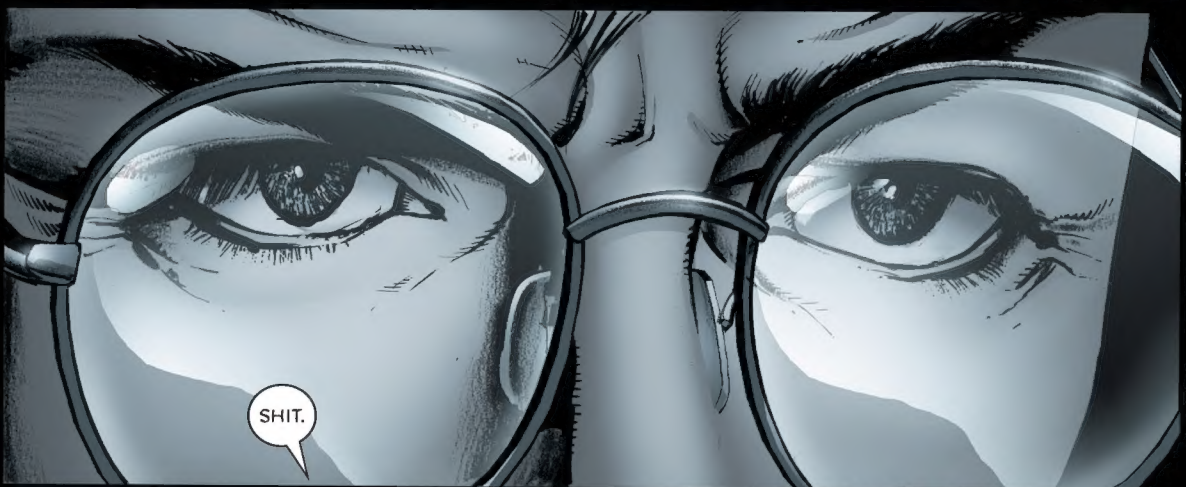










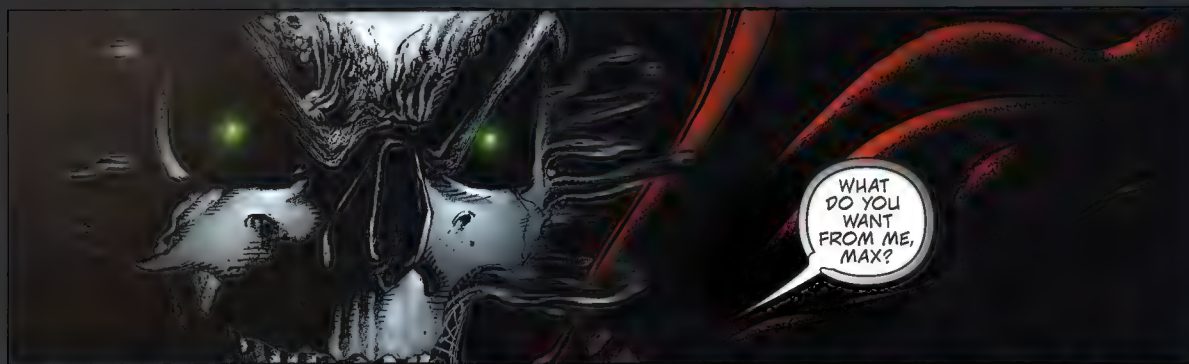





WHAT  
ARE YOU  
DOING  
HERE?











OKAY. AS I  
REMEMBER THERE  
WERE RIVERS OF BLOOD,  
PLAGUES OF TOADS. WE  
HAD EARTHQUAKES.  
WE HAD ZOMBIES. IT  
WAS THE FREAKING  
APOCALYPSE.


THEN  
THERE WAS  
THIS BLINDING  
LIGHT AND  
EVERYTHING WAS  
SUNSHINE AND  
PETUNIAS.

SO WHAT  
HAPPENED  
IN BETWEEN?  
BECAUSE THAT'S  
WHERE MY  
MEMORY IS  
KIND OF  
FUZZY.




YOU  
DON'T  
WANT TO  
KNOW.

IF I  
DIDN'T  
WANT TO  
KNOW, I  
WOULDN'T  
ASK.




EVERYONE  
DIED.



EVERYONE?

DID I  
DIE?



EVERYONE.





MY GOD.

NO. THERE IS NO MORE GOD. NO MORE DEVIL.

WHAT DID YOU DO?

IF WE ALL DIED, THEN HOW...?



I BROUGHT YOU BACK.

I RE-MADE THE WORLD, JUST LIKE BEFORE, ONLY WITHOUT GOD AND SATAN.

THEY'RE GONE.



GONE? WHAT, YOU KILLED THEM?

YOU KILLED GOD?

THEY'RE NOT DEAD. THEY'RE BANISHED. THERE ARE FORCES IN THE UNIVERSE MORE POWERFUL...

Uh-huh. MORE POWERFUL THAN GOD.

RIGHT.



YOU ASKED. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BELIEVE IT. HEAVEN AND HELL ARE SEALED. NO MORE DEMONS AND ANGELS. NOT ON EARTH.

I'VE LOCKED THEM UP AND THROWN AWAY THE KEY.



MY GOD.

I KNOW... NO MORE GOD. I JUST...



...MY GOD...





DOES  
THAT SUIT YOU,  
MAX? I FIXED  
IT. YOU HAVE  
YOUR WORLD  
BACK.

NOW  
LEAVE ME  
ALONE.

I GUESS  
YOU DID  
A GOOD  
JOB.

I  
GUESS.

SO I  
CAN'T HELP  
WONDERING,  
NOW YOU'RE  
KING OF THE  
HILL...

HOW  
COME YOU'RE  
SITTING HERE IN  
WHAT... AND I'M  
BEING CHARITABLE  
HERE... IN WHAT IS  
**NOT** THE MOST  
DESIRABLE OF  
LOCATIONS WHEN  
YOU SHOULD BE  
THROWING  
A PA -



AAAAGH!



BLAM!



BECAUSE  
I DESERVE  
THIS!!

NUH-  
NOBODY  
DESERVES  
THIS.

YOU DON'T  
KNOW WHAT  
I'VE DONE!





PUT  
ME DOWN  
AL. YOU DON'T  
SUH-SCARE  
ME.

I DON'T  
CARE WHAT  
YOU'VE  
DONE.

YOU  
SAVED THE  
PLANET. IN MY  
BOOK THAT  
CANCELS ALL  
DEBTS.



SO ANSWER  
MY QUESTION.  
WHAT DO YOU  
WANT FROM  
ME?!



WHAT DO I  
WANT? OKAY. THE  
THING IS...YOU SAY  
THERE'S NO MORE EVIL IN  
THE WORLD. NOTHING  
SUPERNATURAL. NO  
DEMONIC POSSESSION  
AND SO FORTH?



ONLY, UH...  
WHEN YOU  
PUT THE WORLD  
BACK TOGETHER...  
ARE YOU  
ABSOLUTELY  
SURE YOU DID  
IT RIGHT?

BECAUSE I  
THINK YOU MAY  
HAVE SCREWED  
UP.

NOT THAT I'M  
BLAMING YOU. ME, I CAN'T  
EVEN PUT A SET OF FLAT  
PACK FURNITURE TOGETHER.  
SO I'M NOT JUDGING  
YOU HERE...



CUT TO THE  
CHASE, TWITCH.  
WHAT ARE YOU  
TALKING  
ABOUT?





OKAY.  
HERE'S THE  
THING. A  
COUPLE OF  
DAYS BACK,  
WE HAD A  
MURDER.

GUGH

NOT UNUSUAL IN  
NEW YORK, EXCEPT  
THIS WAS THE FIRST  
SINCE... WHATEVER YOU  
CALL IT... THE WHITE  
LIGHT... WHATEVER.

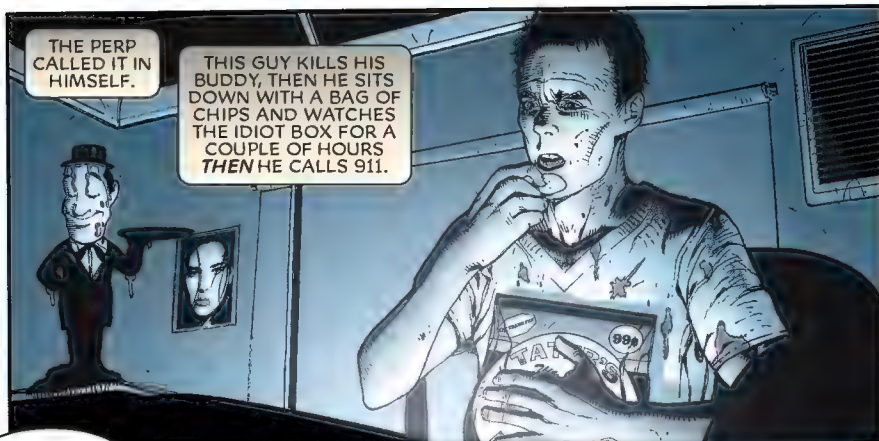
SO IT WAS THE  
FIRST POST-  
APOCALYPSE ACT  
OF VIOLENCE. AND  
I FIGURED, THAT'S  
IT, *NOW* WE'RE  
GETTING BACK TO  
BUSINESS AS  
USUAL.

ONLY THIS WAS NOT  
THE USUAL. THIS WAS  
ONE OF THE MOST BRUTAL  
SLAYINGS I EVER SAW. THE  
PERP BEAT HIS FLATMATE'S  
HEAD INTO A PULP.

USED A  
CAST IRON  
STATUETTE OF  
STAN LAUREL  
IF YOU CAN  
BELIEVE IT.

I CAN'T TELL  
YOU HOW  
MANY WAYS  
THAT IS SO  
WRONG.





THE PERP  
CALLED IT IN  
HIMSELF.

THIS GUY KILLS HIS  
BUDDY, THEN HE SITS  
DOWN WITH A BAG OF  
CHIPS AND WATCHES  
THE IDIOT BOX FOR A  
COUPLE OF HOURS  
THEN HE CALLS 911.

WHY DID  
YOU DO IT  
RUBEN? WE GOT  
THE CORPSE, WE  
GOT OPPORTUNITY,  
WE GOT YOUR  
PRINTS ALL OVER  
THE MURDER  
WEAPON.

ALL WE NEED IS  
THE MOTIVATION AND  
WE GOT US A NEAT  
LITTLE CASE FOR THE  
PROSECUTION.

SO  
WHAT DID  
THE POOR  
BASTARD  
DO?

DO?  
WHERE DO  
I START?

CIGARETTE BUTTS  
IN THE SINK, RINGS AROUND  
THE BATHTUB. HE DRINKS  
MY MILK. STRAIGHT FROM  
THE CARTON.



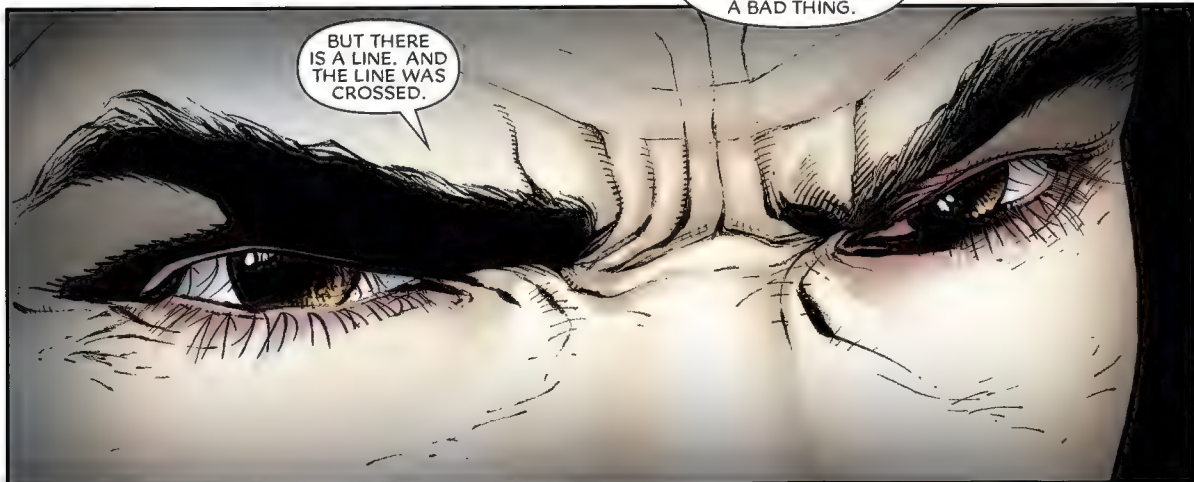
DO YOU  
KNOW HOW  
IRRITATING  
THAT IS?

IN YOUR  
CASE, I'M  
GUESSING  
VERY.

HEY I'M  
A TOLERANT  
KIND'A GUY,  
DETECTIVE.  
BUT  
TODAY...

I KNOW WHAT  
YOU'RE GOING TO SAY.  
I OVER-REACTED. AND  
YOU'RE RIGHT. I DID  
A BAD THING.

BUT THERE  
IS A LINE. AND  
THE LINE WAS  
CROSSED.







THE VICTIM LEFT THE CAP OFF THE TOOTH-PASTE.

THAT'S WHY RUBEN KILLED HIM.

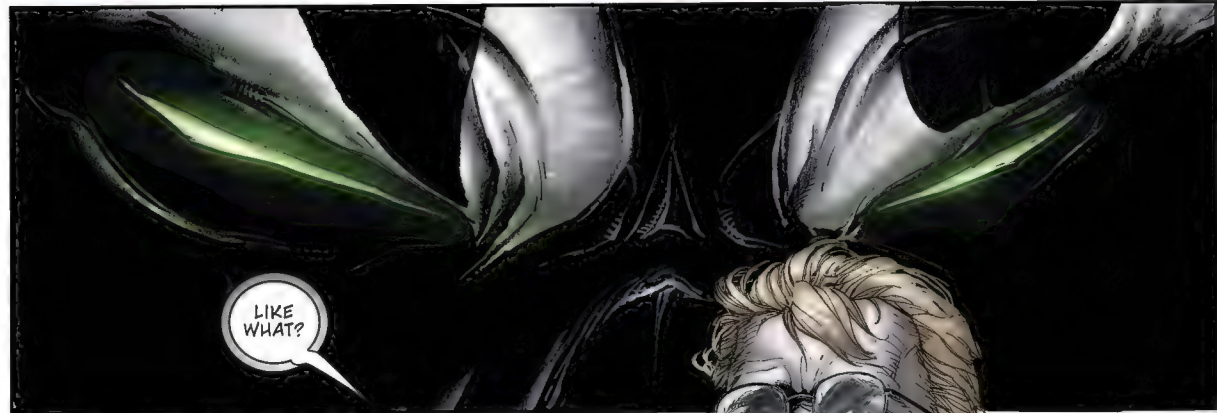
HE HIT THE GUY THIRTY-SEVEN TIMES WITH STAN LAUREL. THIRTY-SEVEN TIMES BEST ESTIMATE THE HEAD WAS A MESS SO...



PEOPLE WILL ALWAYS DO UGLY THINGS, MAX.

I CAN'T FIX THAT. I CAN'T CHANGE HUMAN NATURE.

THIS IS DIFFERENT. THIS IS NOT JUST ONE MURDER WE'RE TALKING ABOUT. THERE'S MORE.



LIKE WHAT?

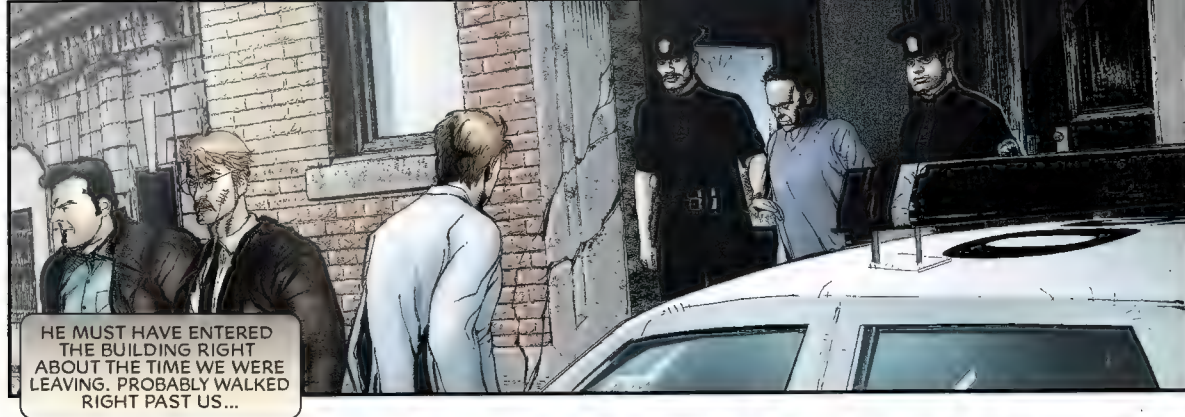
LIKE CELIA EDDOWES. TWENTY-TWO YEARS OLD. ART SCHOOL DROPOUT. SHE HAS AN APARTMENT RIGHT ABOVE OUR WHACK-JOB CRIME SCENE.

CELIA HAS A BOYFRIEND. JOEY LEBOWSKI. THE POOR SAP IS TOTALLY SMITTEN WITH HER. FOR WEEKS HE'S BEEN WORKING UP TO PROPOSING TO HER. SHE'S BEEN ACTING WEIRD, BLOWING HOT AND COLD AND IT'S DRIVING HIM CRAZY. WILL SHE, WON'T SHE?

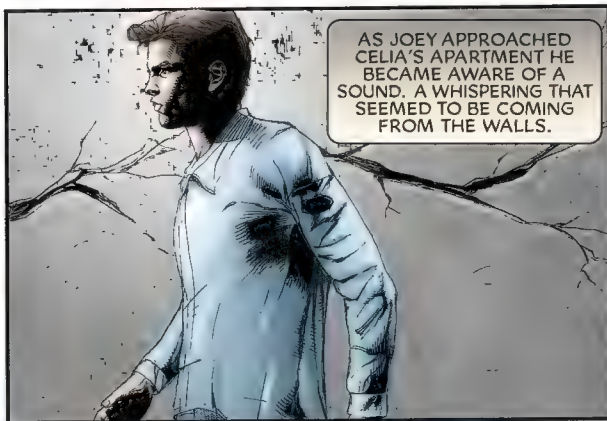
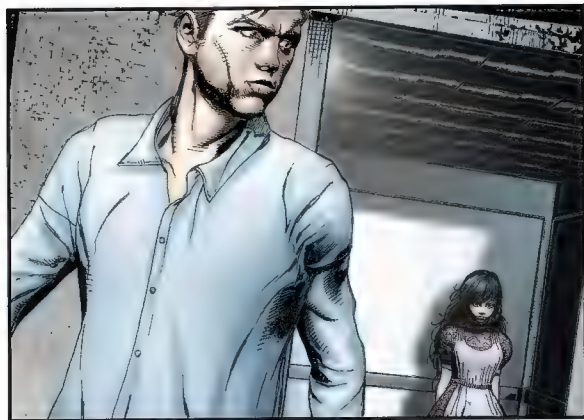
FINALLY HE MAKES THE DECISION. WHATEVER HAPPENS, THIS IS THE DAY HE POPS THE QUESTION.



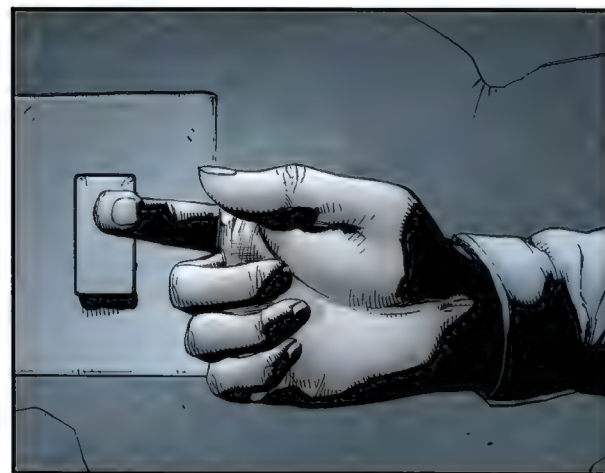
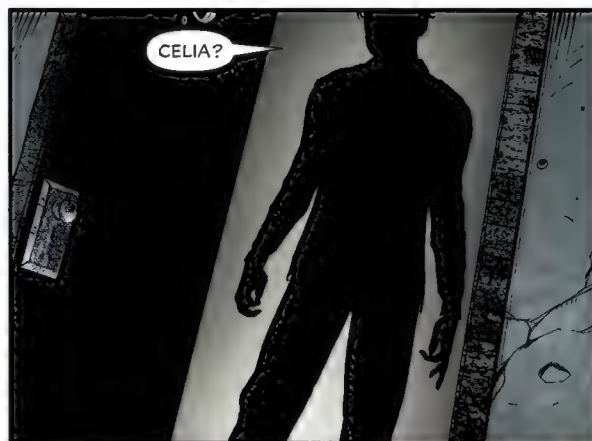
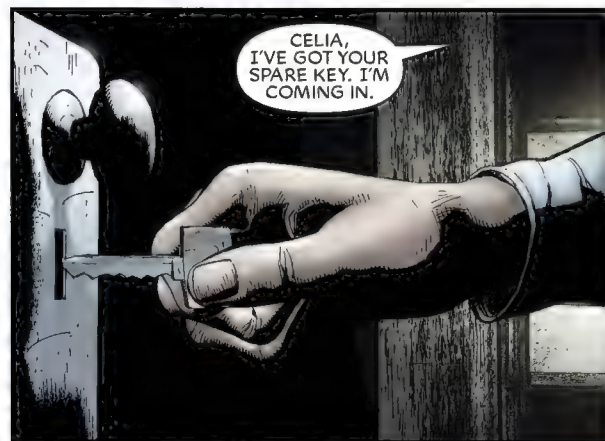
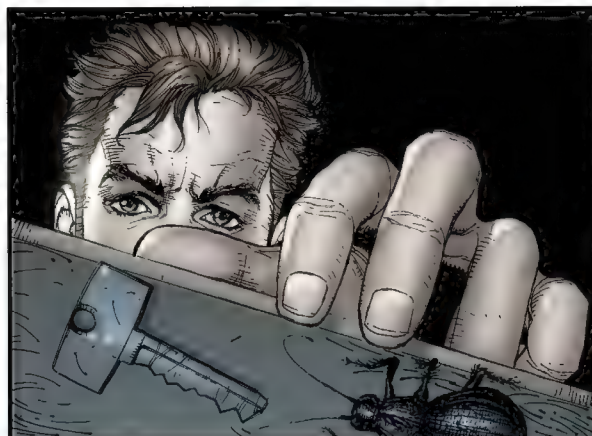
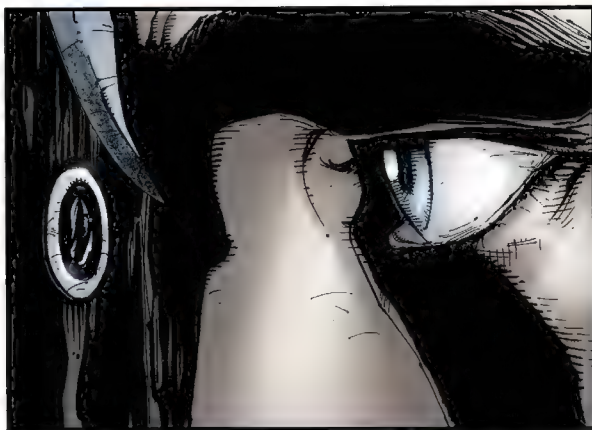








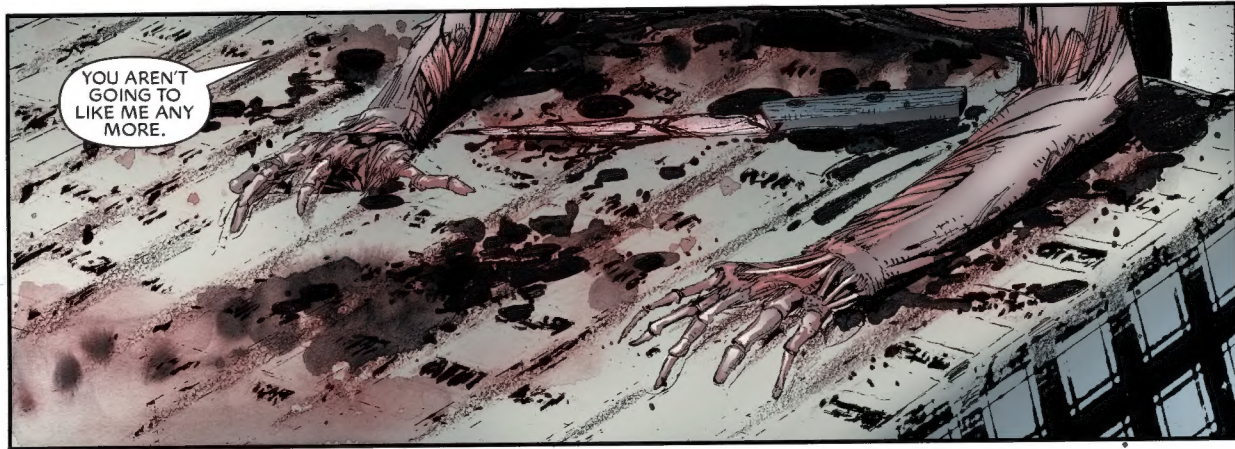
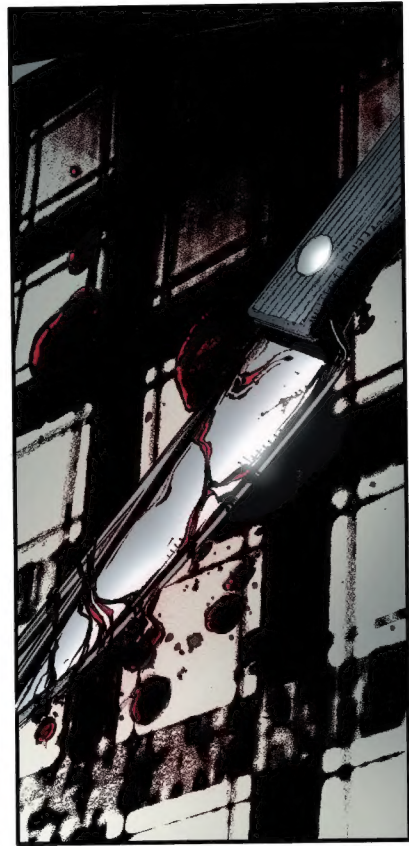














I HAD TO  
SEE WHAT WAS  
UNDERNEATH.

TO BE CONTINUED...







Tyrant  
Lizard  
King

EMPIRE